

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2718
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 MADRID 09580

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, PORG, MARR, NATO, SP
SUBJECT: PSOE'S MUGICA ON DEFENSE/FOREIGN POLICY
QUESTIONS

1. SUMMARY: THE CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES' FIRST DEFENSE
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S ENRIQUE MUGICA,
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REITERATED TO ME NOVEMBER 30 THE REASONS FOR PSOE
OPPOSITION TO SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO, INCLUDING
THE PARTY'S ARGUMENTS THAT THE ALLIANCE'S ORIGINAL
RAISON D'ETRE NO LONGER OBTAINED, THE COST TO SPAIN
OF MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE EXCESSIVE, AND THE GRADUALLY
MATURING AND MODERATING BASE OF THE PSOE WAS NOT
PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE PARTY'S

POSITION ON THE NATO ISSUE (TEXT OF RECENT MUGICA INTERVIEW ON DEFENSE QUESTIONS BEING POUCHED). MUGICA READILY ACKNOWLEDGED THE SUPERFICIALITY OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF DEFENSE MATTERS AND WELCOMED A CONTINUING DIALOGUE ON SUCH ISSUES. THAT PART OF OUR CONVERSATION DEALING WITH DOMESTIC SPANISH POLITICS IS BEING REPORTED BY SEPTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. ON NOVEMBER 30 PSOE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ENRIQUE MUGICA, RECENTLY DESIGNATED CHAIRMAN (PRESIDENTE) OF THE CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES DEFENSE COMMITTEE, LUNCHEDED WITH ME FOR AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON BASIC DEFENSE QUESTIONS. DURING OUR EXTENDED CONVERSATION, MUGICA, WHO READILY ACKNOWLEDGED HIS LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF DEFENSE MATTERS AND CLEARLY WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A DIALOGUE, MADE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST.

3. ROLE OF DEFENSE COMMITTEE. MUGICA AGREED THAT THE FIRST AND PRINCIPAL TASK OF THE COMMITTEE WOULD BE THE DEFINITION OF SPAIN'S BASIC DEFENSE POLICY, AND THEN TO DECIDE ON THE APPROPRIATE MEANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THAT POLICY. THE COMMITTEE'S APPROACH, HE SAID, WOULD BE BASED ON THE CORTES' POPULAR MANDATE TO LEGISLATE, INCLUDING IN THE DEFENSE FIELD, BUT IT OBVIOUSLY WOULD INCORPORATE INPUTS FROM THE

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MILITARY AND WOULD TAKE CARE NOT TO BRUISE MILITARY SENSIBILITIES. HE HOPED TO PERSUADE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEFENSE GUTIERREZ MELLADO TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE FROM TIME TO TIME. HIS LONGER RUN GOAL -- A CLEARER ASSERTION OF CIVILIAN AUTHORITY OVER THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT -- WOULD BE ACHIEVED ONLY SLOWLY. MUGICA ADDED THAT WHETHER UNDER A PSOE GOVERNMENT THE DEFENSE MINISTER WOULD BE A CIVILIAN WOULD DEPEND ON THE TERMS WHICH THE PSOE MIGHT BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE MILITARY TO OBTAIN ITS BACKING FOR A PSOE PRIME MINISTER. HE WAS INCLINED TO THINK THAT AT THE OUTSET THE PSOE MIGHT HAVE TO ACCEPT THE CONTINUATION OF A MILITARY DEFENSE MINISTER.

4. "NO" TO NATO. ALTHOUGH HE INSISTED HE PERSONALLY WAS RATHER OPEN-MINDED ON THE QUESTION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP, MUGICA VOICED THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION TO SPANISH ACCESSION:
-- NATO WAS CREATED "TO DEFEND DEMOCRACY FROM STALINISM," BUT RECENT PROGRESS TOWARD A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION WAS MAKING THE ALLIANCE OBSOLETE. THE PSOE, IN ORDER TO PURSUE A COHERENT

POLICY OF PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL PEACE, THEREFORE
HAD TO OPPOSE SPANISH ACCESSION.

-- A CENTRAL OBJECTIVE OF THE MAJOR POLITICAL GROUPS
THROUGHOUT THE SPANISH TRANSITION HAD BEEN TO AVOID
ANYTHING THAT WOULD CONSTITUTE A POLITICAL "TRAUMA."
BUT ANY CONSIDERATION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP, MUGICA
BELIEVED, WOULD CAUSE JUST SUCH AN UNWANTED "TRAUMA,"
IN THAT IT WOULD INVOLVE A MAJOR SHIFT IN BASIC FOREIGN
POLICY WITH WHICH THE SPANISH PUBLIC WAS COMFORTABLE
AND WOULD BE PERCEIVED BY MANY AS INCREASING THE
THREAT TO SPAIN. FOR THAT REASON, MUGICA CONCLUDED,
THE SPANISH PEOPLE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY REJECT NATO
MEMBERSHIP IF THE QUESTION WERE NOW PUT TO REFERENDUM.

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-- THE MATERIAL COST OF SPANISH ACCESSION, IN TERMS OF THE NECESSARY MODERNIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES, WOULD BE EXTREMELY HIGH, MORE THAN SPAIN COULD AFFORD.
-- FROM A PARTISAN POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW, MUGICA CONTINUED, AND ALTHOUGH HE PERSONALLY HAD "NO PROBLEM" WITH EVENTUAL SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE, WE HAD TO REMEMBER THAT THE PSOE'S RANK AND FILE WOULD
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NOT STAND FOR IT. AS A PARTY IN OPPOSITION, THE PSOE MUST SEEK CONSISTENCY BEFORE ITS ELECTORATE. OPPOSITION TO THE ALLIANCE AND THE U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SPAIN WAS PART OF THE POLITICAL BAGGAGE CARRIED BY THE PARTY FROM ITS LONG PERIOD OF CLANDESTINITY, AND THE BASE SIMPLY WAS NOT NOW PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY 180 DEGREE SHIFT IN POLICY. THIS LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, THAT THE PSOE, ONCE IN GOVT, MIGHT EVENTUALLY RE-EXAMINE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL REALITY AND JUDGE THAT ACCESSION WOULD BE CALLED FOR. SUCH A HYPOTHETICAL DECISION, HE BELIEVED, MIGHT WELL ENGENDER NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS AMONG THE BASE UNDER THOSE CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES.

-- FINALLY, MUGICA TOOK REFUGE IN ASSERTING THAT PARTIES TO THE PSOE'S RIGHT AND THE GOVT ITSELF WERE NOT VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT NATO MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEAR TERM, EITHER PHILOSOPHICALLY OR IN TERMS OF LIKELY MATERIAL COST TO SPAIN, AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, THE GOVT SEEMED HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO MOVE ON THE ISSUE WHEN IT ALMOST CERTAINLY COULD MUSTER ONLY A BARE MAJORITY TO PASS ANY PRO-NATO RESOLUTION IN THE CORTES.

5. BASES ON THE BACK BURNER. MUGICA REITERATED PSOE OPPOSITION IN PRINCIPLE TO U.S. FACILITIES IN SPAIN, BUT HE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT, JUST AS THE PARTY OPPOSES RAISING THE NATO ISSUE AT THIS JUNCTURE BECAUSE OF ITS LIKELY "TRAUMATIC" POLITICAL EFFECT, IT ALSO OPPOSED MAKING AN ISSUE OF THE BASES QUESTION. THE TIME TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE OBVIOUSLY WAS DURING THE CLOSING MONTHS OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT. AT MY SUGGESTION, MUGICA SAID HE WOULD RAISE WITH DEFENSE
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MINISTER GUTIERREZ MELLADO, IN A SOON-TO-BE-HELD MEETING, THE POSSIBILITY OF VISITS BY THE DEFENSE

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP (I.E. WITHOUT THE COMMITTEE'S COMMUNIST MEMBERS, IF THAT PROVED NECESSARY TO ASSUAGE MILITARY SENSITIVITIES) TO SPANISH BASES, INCLUDING AT LEAST SOME OF THOSE CONTAINING US FACILITIES.

6. "YES" TO THE WEST. THROUGHOUT HIS PRESENTATION, MUGICA STRESSED THAT THE "NEUTRALITY" ENVISIONED BY THE PSOE WAS "INDEPENDENCE WITHIN THE WESTERN FAMILY." HE BELIEVED SPAIN'S FOREIGN POLICY EFFORTS SHOULD BE

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

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CONCENTRATED ON THREE AREAS: EUROPE; THE MEDITERRANEAN AND MIDDLE EAST; AND LATIN AMERICA (WHERE HE THOUGHT THE SPANISH TRANSITION MIGHT BE HELPFUL MODEL FOR SIMILAR

POLITICAL EVOLUTIONS FROM AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES).
HE DISAGREED FUNDAMENTALLY, HE SAID, WITH THE THIRD
WORLD ORIENTATION OF SOME OF HIS OWN PSOE COLLEAGUES
(ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY PSOE CURRENT WAS CLEARLY PRO-
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EUROPE), AND HE HAD SOME UNUSUALLY CRITICAL WORDS FOR
ALGERIA AND THE FRENTE POLISARIO, WHERE HE SAW THE FORMER
CRASSLY MANIPULATING THE LATTER. (I NOTE THAT WHILE
THE PSOE IS NOT ABOUT TO WITHDRAW ITS SUPPORT OF THE
POLISARIO, THE SAHARA CONFLICT, MORE THAN ANY OTHER
SINGLE ISSUE, IS ENDING THE PARTY'S INNOCENCE ON FOREIGN
POLICY QUESTIONS AND DEMONSTRATING THAT IT CAN NO
LONGER AFFORD THE LUXURY OF A SIMPLISTIC AND
SUPERFICIAL APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS WHICH
IS LONG ON IDEALISM AND VERY SHORT ON A CAREFUL
CONSIDERATION OF COMPLEXITIES AND IMPLICATIONS.)
FINALLY, MUGICA REITERATED THE PSOE'S LONGSTANDING
SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, TO INCLUDE THE
FORMATION OF A EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY OF WHICH
THE SPANISH MILITARY WOULD BE A PART. HE MADE IT QUITE
CLEAR THAT HE BELIEVED EUROPE HAD TO DEFEND ITSELF
FROM THE SOVIETS, ALTHOUGH HE SAW SPAIN'S DEFENSE
ORIENTATION COMPLICATED BY A POTENTIAL THREAT AS
WELL FROM THE SOUTH, PARTICULARLY AS THE RESULT OF
INCIPIENT INSTABILITY IN MOROCCO AND THE POSSIBILITY
THAT HASSAN MIGHT EXERT MILITARY PRESSURE ON CEUTA
AND MELILLA (SPANISH PLACES OF SOVEREIGNTY ON THE
MOROCCAN COAST) AND EVEN THE CANARIES IF HE FELT
COMPELLED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS TO DO SO.

7. IN REPOSE TO THE VARIOUS POINTS RAISED BY MUGICA,
I EMPHASIZED THAT:

-- SPAIN'S DECISION ON AN ALLIANCE STRATEGY SHOULD
INDEED FLOW FROM A THOUGHTFUL AND IN-DEPTH CONSIDERATION
OF SPAIN'S GENERAL SECURITY NEEDS, INCLUDING THE
NECESSITY OF RE-ORIENTING A LARGELY INTERNAL-SECURITY-
ORIENTED MILITARY. THE REASONS FOR NATO'S CREATION
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AND SUBSEQUENT MAINTENANCE STILL OBTAINED IN OUR VIEW.
ALTHOUGH MUGICA DID NOT HIMSELF ALLUDE TO THE NOW
STANDARD PSOE ARGUMENT THAT SPANISH ACCESSION TO NATO
WOULD SOMEHOW DESTABILIZE THE MEDITERRANEAN AND EUROPE
GENERALLY BY COMPELLING THE SOVIETS TO PRESSURE

YUGOSLAVIA INTO THE WARSAW PACT, I SUGGESTED TO MUGICA
THAT SPAIN'S DECISION ON NATO WAS HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO
HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON WHAT HAPPENED TO POST-
TITO YUGOSLAVIA AND WE AGREED THAT A SPANISH DECISION
SHOULD BE BASED MORE DIRECTLY ON SPANISH INTERESTS.
-- CONVENTIONAL SPANISH WISDOM CONCERNING THE ELEVATED
COST TO SPAIN OF NATO MEMBERSHIP APPEARED TO US TO BE

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OFF THE MARK. SPAIN'S MILITARY BUDGET ALREADY COMPARED
FAVORABLY WITH THOSE OF SEVERAL ALLIES. IT SEEMED TO
US MORE OF A QUESTION OF SPENDING MORE EFFICIENTLY AND
ON THE BASIS OF REORDERED PRIORITIES. (MUGICA AGREED
THAT THE SPANISH MILITARY WAS BEING RUN VERY

INEFFICIENTLY, INDICATING THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD RECENTLY
BY ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF VEGA THAT THE SPANISH ARMED
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FORCES COULD BE CUT BY 100,000 MEN AND STILL PERFORM
THEIR MISSION EFFECTIVELY.)

-- IN CONTRAST TO HIS VIEW OF THE GOVT'S NATO POSTURE,
WE BELIEVED IT TO BE FUNDAMENTALLY IN FAVOR OF SPANISH
MEMBERSHIP. BUT WE AGREED THAT A BROAD CONSENSUS,
NOT A SLIM PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, WAS NECESSARY ON THE
NATO QUESTION.

-- IN ANY EVENT, AS MUGICA KNEW, WE HAD IN PRINCIPLE
SUPPORTED SPANISH MEMBERSHIP FOR SOME TIME, BUT WERE
NOT EXERTING ANY PRESSURE ON THE GOS IN THIS REGARD.
WE STOOD PREPARED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE
VIEWS AT ANY TIME, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO A CONTINUING
DIALOGUE WITH MUGICA AND OTHERS. HE RESPONDED THAT
HE UNDERSTOOD OUR POSITION COMPLETELY, AND SAID HE
WELCOMED A CONTINUING DIALOGUE ON NATO AND OTHER DEFENSE
QUESTIONS.

8. COMMENT: MUGICA'S PRESENTATION IS PARTICULARLY
NOTEWORTHY ON THREE COUNTS: THE CLEAR TILT OF HIS
VERSION OF NEUTRALITY; HIS DEMONSTRATED OPEN-MINDEDNESS
ON THE NATO QUESTION; AND HIS OMISSION OF THE YUGOSLAV
ANALOGY WHICH IS SO MUCH A PART OF THE USUAL PSOE
PRESENTATION ON NATO MEMBERSHIP. ALTHOUGH HIS CLEARLY
IS A MINORITY VOICE ON THIS ISSUE IN PSOE COUNCILS, I
BELIEVE IT DOES TESTIFY TO A CERTAIN GRADUAL SOPHISTICA-
TION OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP'S FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS
GENERALLY. FACT THAT MUGICA WAS PICKED FOR DEFENSE
COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP REFLECTS IMPORTANCE WHICH SUAREZ
AND OTHER UCD LEADERS ATTACH TO BROADENING THE VIEWS
OF THE SOCIALISTS ON DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY
MATTERS. HOWEVER, IN THIS CONTEXT IT SHOULD BE NOTED
THAT COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS CARRY NO SPECIAL POWERS AND
ARE IN NO WAY COMPARABLE TO SIMILAR POSITIONS IN OUR
CONGRESS. THIS WAS STRESSED TO ME DURING MY CONVERSATION
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WITH UCD LEADERS SANCHEZ-TERAN AND PEREZ-LLORCA NOVEMBER
29 (SEPT), BOTH OF WHOM NOTED THAT CORTES CHAIRMAN-
SHIPS ONLY HAVE SYMBOLIC VALUE. STABLER

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